


# What Do I Do Next?

## Resources for Small Archives

**Sarah Leu and  
Celia Caust-Ellenbogen**

**HCI-PSAR Project Surveyors  
Bucks County Symposium  
October 2, 2014**

- 
- I added to an existing collection.
  - I received a new collection.
  - I want to process a collection.
  - I want to start a digitization project.
  - I want to establish a collecting policy.
  - I want learn more about archival theory!



What do I do next?



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## Question of the Week

What was the name of the Philadelphia Phillies ballpark once located at North Broad Street and West Lehigh Avenue?

10/20/13

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## Resources for Small Archives



This page provides information and resources for small repositories about managing archival collections. This page is a work in progress; more will be added as the Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small

Archival Repositories (HCI-PSAR) continues.

### I. Archival basics

- A. [Archival theory and practice](#)
- B. [Archivists' organizations](#)
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### II. Preservation

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- A. [Theories of arrangement](#)
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- D. [Archivists' Toolkit and Archives Space](#)
- E. [HCI-PSAR finding aid worksheets](#)

### IV. Institutional development

## Archival basics

The overview of general archival information and resources that is included in the HCI-PSAR survey report can be downloaded in PDF format [here](#).

### Archival theory and practice

Archivists think about the materials they manage primarily in terms of *collections* rather than individual items. Understanding archival holdings in larger groupings makes it easier to summarize the entirety of the materials, and also helps maintain the connections between interrelated items. Archivists define collections according to the *principle of provenance*, which is one of the primary tenets of archival theory. Provenance asserts that the basic defining element of a collection is its creator, which could be the individual, family, or organization who created or received the items in a collection. Materials created or collected by the same individual or group should be kept together. Therefore, the creators or collectors of the materials should determine the various collections in your repository. Repositories can acquire provenance-based collections from creators or third parties, or they can create collections themselves by assembling materials from different sources together by format or subject (e.g., "Photograph collection," "Civil War collection"). In the latter

The Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories (HCI-PSAR) is supported by a grant from the [Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#).

## Related

[Landing Page](#)  
[Archival Adventures in Small Repositories](#)

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[Archivists' Toolkit and ArchivesSpace](#)

Entire presentation is  
posted online at:  
<http://hsp.org/hcipsar/resources>

# I added to an existing collection.

What do I do next?



# Adding to an existing collection

Update your own records.

→ Remember that our finding aids are just a snapshot. YOU are the authority.

# Adding to an existing collection

To update a finding aid on PACSCL site before April 2016, contact Sarah Leu ([sleu@hsp.org](mailto:sleu@hsp.org))

At end of HCI-PSAR (April 2016), we will announce a new contact for you, probably at UPenn.

We will need to know the following information about your **new** materials:

- Extent (size in inches)
- Dates (if outside current range)
- Description (content, format, subjects)

# I received a new collection

What do I do next?



# I received a new collection

Update your own records.

→ Remember that our finding aids are just a snapshot. YOU are the authority.



# I received a new collection

To update a finding aid on PACSCL site before April 2016, contact Sarah Leu ([sleu@hsp.org](mailto:sleu@hsp.org))

At end of HCI-PSAR (April 2016), we will announce a new contact for you, probably at UPenn.

→ Follow the format of the collections descriptions in your HCI-PSAR report

## HCI-PSAR Finding Aid Worksheets

<http://hsp.org/hcipsar/resources> :

- Word version (DOC)
- Excel version (XLS)

## Worksheet: Creating a Basic Finding Aid for an Archival Collection

This worksheet was created by Celia Caust Ellenbogen in 2011-2014 as part of the Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories (<http://hsp.org/hcipsar>), a project of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

<b>Finding aid author:</b>					
<b>Repository:</b>					
<b>Collection title:</b>					
<b>Creator:</b>		<b>Type:</b>		<b>Source:</b>	
<b>Dates:</b>					
<b>Collection No.:</b>					
<b>Extent:</b>		<b>Linear feet</b>	<i>or</i>		<b>Cubic feet</b>
	<b>Note:</b>				
<b>Provenance:</b>					
<b>Access:</b>	Contact the repository for information about accessing this collection.				
<b>Related archival collections:</b>					
<b>Languages:</b>	English				
<b>Biographical / Historical Background:</b>					
	<b>Bibliography:</b>				
<b>Scope and Content note:</b>					

Microsoft Word  
(DOC)  
worksheet

✓ Inventory list  
option

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	<b>Worksheet: Creating a Basic Finding Aid for an Archival Collection</b>								
2	This worksheet was created by Celia Caust Ellenbogen in 2011-2014 as part of the Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories ( <a href="http://hsp.org/hcipsar">http://hsp.org/hcipsar</a> ), a project of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation								
3	<b>Finding aid author:</b>								
4	<b>Repository:</b>								
5	<b>Collection title:</b>								
6	<b>Creator:</b>								
7	<b>Type:</b>								
8	<b>Dates:</b>								
9	<b>Date expression:</b>								
10	<b>Date begin:</b>								
11	<b>Date end:</b>								
12	<b>Bulk date begin:</b>								
13	<b>Bulk date end:</b>								
14	<b>Collection No.:</b>								
15	<b>Extent:</b>								
16	<b>Linear feet</b>								
17	<b>or</b>								
18	<b>Note:</b>								
19	<b>Provenance:</b>								
20	<b>Access:</b>								
21	Contact for information about accessing this collection.								
22	<b>Related collections:</b>								
23	<b>Languages:</b>								
24	English								
25	<b>Biographical / Historical Background:</b>								

Page 1

```

1 <?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8" standalone="yes" ?>
2 <ead xsi:schemaLocation="urn:isbn:1-931666-22-9
  http://www.loc.gov/ead/ead.xsd"
  xmlns:ns2="http://www.w3.org/1999/xlink"
  xmlns="urn:isbn:1-931666-22-9"
3 xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance">
4 <eadheader repositoryencoding="iso15511"
  countryencoding="iso3166-1" dateencoding="iso8601"
5 language="eng" id="1">
6 <eadid id="1">
7 <filedesc>
8 <titlemt>
9 <titleproper />
10 <subtitle>
11 , cubic feet
12 </subtitle>
13 <author></author>
14 </titlemt>
15 <publicationstmt>
16 <publisher></publisher>
17 </publicationstmt>
18 </filedesc>
19 <eadheader>
20 <archdesc level="collection">
21 <did>
22 <unittitle></unittitle>
23 <unitid></unitid>
24 <repository>
25 <corpname></corpname>
26 </repository>
27 <langmaterial>
28 <language langcode="eng"/>
29 </langmaterial>
30 <physdesc>
31 <extent> Cubic feet</extent>
  
```

# Microsoft Excel (XLS) worksheet

✗ Inventory list  
option

✓ Automatically  
formatted for  
PACSCL website

# I want to process a collection.

What do I do next?



# What is processing?

Rehousing,  
Arranging, and  
Describing  
an archival collection

# Rehousing - Basics

- Storage enclosures should be archival grade, acid free
- Large papers should be stored flat, not folded or rolled



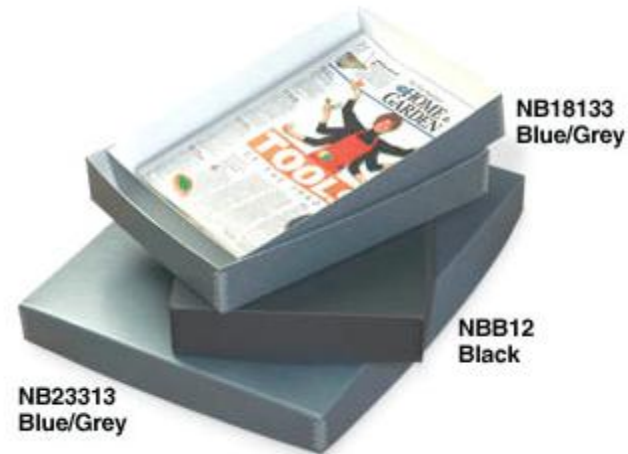
Spacers



- Papers in boxes should be properly supported, neither bulging nor slumping

# Rehousing - Supplies

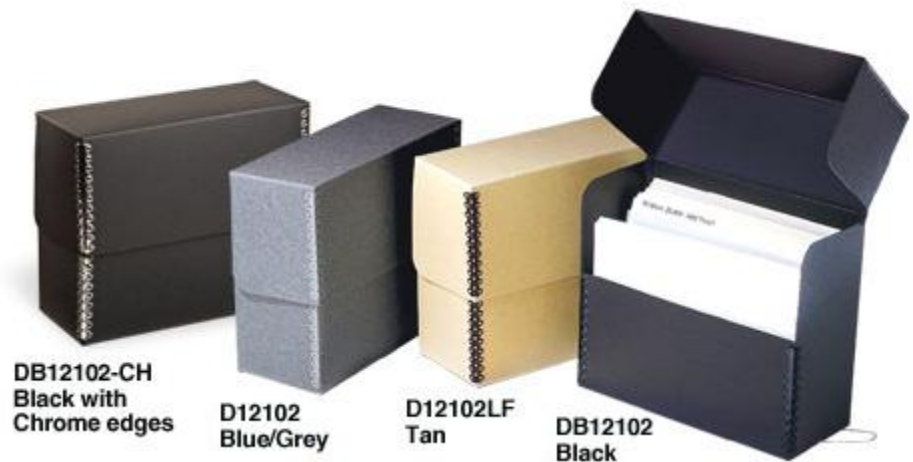
- Established archival suppliers include:
  - Gaylord Brothers
  - Hollinger Metal Edge
  - University Products



Flat boxes  
(aka  
oversize  
boxes,  
clamshell  
boxes)



Record carton (aka Paige box)



Document boxes  
(aka Hollinger boxes, flip-top boxes)



# Storage Tips

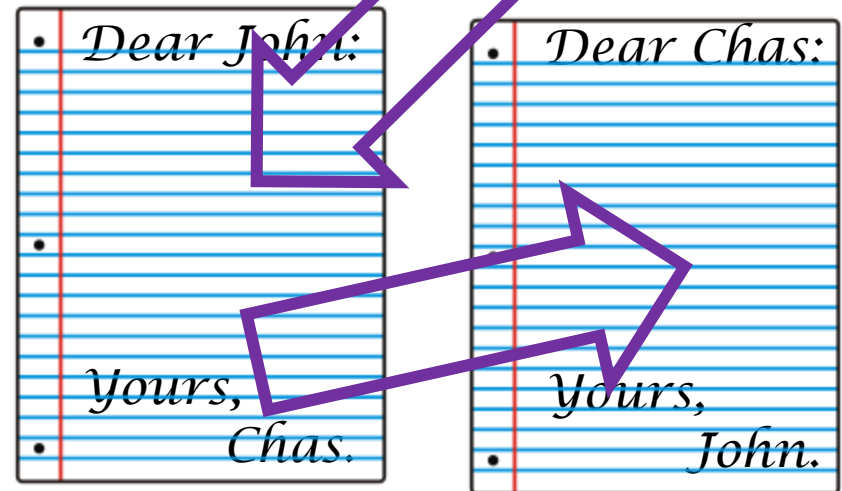
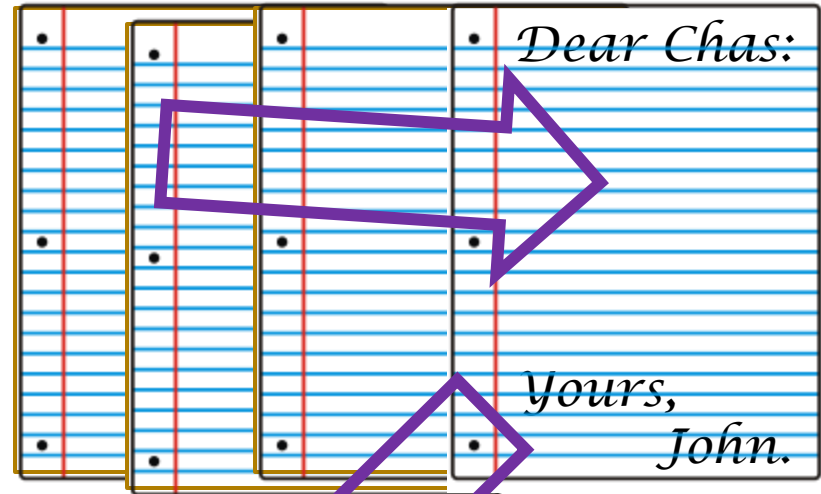
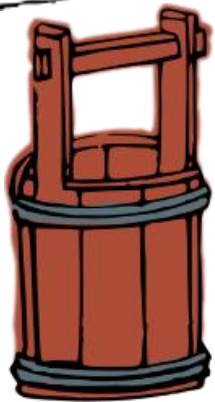
- To label boxes, purchase foil-backed labels
  - Regular office labels will fall off in 10-20 years
- Store boxes at least 6" off floor
- Choose metal shelving – avoid wood
  - Check discount restaurant suppliers for sturdy metal shelving
- Check Craigslist for architecture firms discarding flat files



# Arrangement

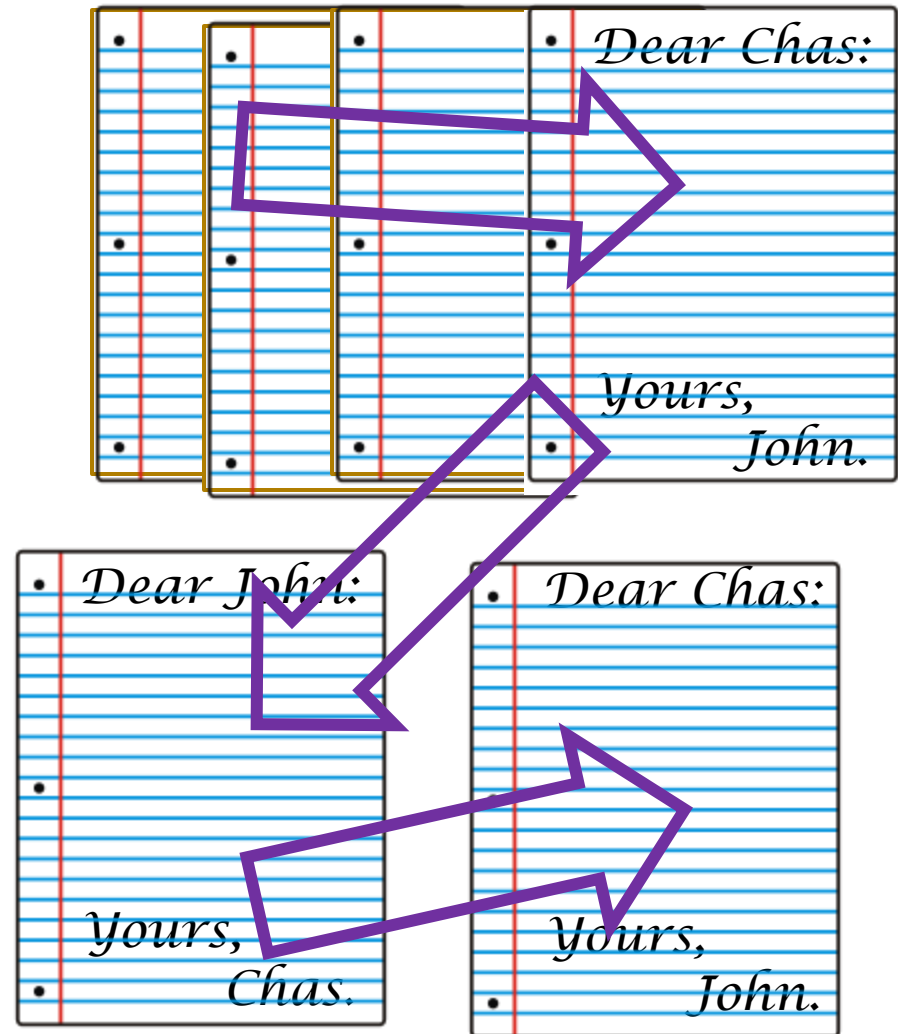
- Item vs. Collection
- Provenance and original order
- Hierarchical organization and description

# Item vs. Collection



# Provenance and Original Order

- **Provenance:** keep documents grouped into collections by creator
- **Original order:** respect original order established by creator [*note: rule doesn't extend to original DISorder*]



# Hierarchical Organization and Description

## **Homer Simpson papers, 1987-2014**

### Series I. Family papers

Subseries A. Letters from Marge

Subseries B. Bart and Lisa report cards

### Series II. Work papers

Subseries A. Nuclear Power Plant

Folder: Paychecks

Folder: Probation warnings

Subseries B. Mr. Plow

Folder: Receipts and invoices

Folder: Commercial planning and script



# How to Parse Series

*Follow the existing organizational scheme if it makes sense*

- Document type
  - Series: Correspondence, Scrapbooks, Financial records
- Period or phase
  - Personal papers series: Education, Military, Career
  - Business records series: Miller Co., Miller & Sons, Ark & Miller
- Department or person
  - Business records series: CEO, Sales department, Finance office
  - Family papers series: Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa

# Description

- When cataloging, start by creating a record for each COLLECTION as a whole!
- Adding lower-level description is optional depending on the complexity and importance of the collection
- Try the finding aid worksheets at <http://hsp.org/hcipsar/resources>

# I want to digitize materials.

What do I do next?





# Permissions

- Ensure that you have the right to copy/distribute the image before you put it online!
  - Check your donor form. If your existing deed of gift doesn't have a copyright release, consider inserting it for the future.
- Is the content in the public domain? If so, state that it is. If not, include a disclaimer.

# Scanning

- Scanner ideally with low platen temperature
- 400 dpi, 24-bit color, TIFF
- Keep a master unedited copy
  - Plus edited, smaller, access copies if desired
- Sufficient and safe storage space
  - At least two master copies (unedited) stored in different buildings
- Establish file naming conventions



# Programs

- Omeka
- ViewShare
- PastPerfect



Free for basic,  
low-cost for  
enhanced features.

They can host the  
website for you  
(for a fee).

Good for online  
exhibitions with  
pictures and text.

<http://omeka.net>



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### PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL MARKERS

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Arnold Nawrocki

Lorenzo Langstroth



This article originally appeared in [Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine](#)  
Volume XXXVIII, Number 4 - Fall 2012

The small southern York County borough of Seven Valleys - which counted a population of 517 residents in the 2010 Census - has a lengthy history dating to the earliest German settlers in the mid-eighteenth century. In 1838 after the Northern Central Railroad Company's line linked Baltimore, Maryland, with York, Jacob Smyser and John E. Ziegler opened the first store and warehouse near the station, originally named Smyser. Seven Valleys, close to Hanover Junction, a railroad and telegraph hub which attracted both Union and Confederate soldiers during the American Civil War, was visited by both sides. Northern forces protected bridges over the Codorus Creek, but were routed after the South attacked Hanover Junction. Seven Valleys - unknown even to many residents - earned its niche in history for being the site of the nation's first commercially produced ice cream.



Free.

Good for analyzing data and making different types of visualizations (map, timeline, chart, list) that you can embed on your website.

<http://viewshare.org>





\$870 + \$445 for  
online plug-in

Includes hosted  
site.

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More Random Images

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# I want to establish a collecting policy.

What do I do next?



# What is a collecting policy?

## Acquisition Policy

n. ~ “An **official statement** issued by an archives or manuscript repository **identifying the kinds of materials it accepts** and the conditions or terms that affect their acquisition.”

--Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*



# Why is a collecting policy important?

- Keep your institution's collection focused
- Tactfully refuse unwanted donations
- Save storage space
- Keep a diverse group of staff/board/volunteers on the same page



# What should be in my policy?

- What geographic region will you collect?
- What time period will you collect?
- Are there any subject areas that you will specialize in?
- Is there anything you will *not* collect? (size, format, subject area, etc.?)



*What other repositories might have overlapping collecting areas?*

# Look for samples to emulate

- Look on the websites of large archives or museums you admire
- Ask peer (small) institutions to see theirs

The screenshot shows the website of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The header includes navigation links (Home, About, Login/Register, Contact), a red bar with News, Events, and Blogs, and social media icons. The main navigation bar features Collections, History Online, Publications, Education, and a Search bar. The left sidebar lists various collection categories and research tools. The main content area is titled 'Collection Scope' and contains a paragraph about the policy approved by the Board of Councilors on 8 June 2009. It then lists the collections of the Society, including those of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies and the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. A 'Printed Holdings' section lists specific areas of focus, and a 'Manuscripts' section is also mentioned. A 'Related' sidebar on the right points to a page titled 'How to Donate Your Materials'.

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Home > Collections > About Our Collections > Collection Scope

## Collection Scope

*This policy was approved by the Board of Councilors of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on 8 June 2009. For more information, see also [How to Donate Your Materials and Archives Department Collecting Guidelines](#).*

The collections of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania include those of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies and the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania and document, from the perspective of the Philadelphia region, the diverse members, migrations, and experiences of the American family, the roots of the United States, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's history. The Society focuses its collecting as follows:

**Printed Holdings.** These treat primarily:

- Pennsylvania and adjacent areas from the period of initial European encounters to the present
- The migrations of people to Pennsylvania and from Pennsylvania to points east of the Mississippi
- The selective study of ethnic communities across the United States, including their national organizational life and periodical production
- The nation's founding

**Manuscripts.** These treat primarily:

**Related**

Page  
[How to Donate Your Materials](#)

<http://hsp.org/collections/about-our-collections/collection-scope>

# I want learn more!

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[Archivists' Toolkit and ArchivesSpace](#)

<http://hsp.org/hcipsar/resources>

Stay in touch for future  
HCI-PSAR events!!!

# Highlighted Resources

- Books to consider purchasing:
  - Carmicheal, David W. *Organizing Archival Records: A Practical Method of Arrangement & Description for Small Archives*. 3rd edition (2012). (American Assoc. for State and Local History)
  - Zamon, Christina. *The Lone Arranger: Succeeding in a Small Repository*. (Society of American Archivists)
  - Hamill, Lois. *Archives for the Lay Person: A Guide to Managing Cultural Collections*. (AASLH)
- Connecting to Collections Online Community
- Preservation resources
  - Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts
  - Northeast Document Conservation Center

This presentation is posted online at  
<http://hsp.org/hcipsar/resources>

# What Do I Do Next?

## Resources for Small Archives

**Sarah Leu and  
Celia Caust-Ellenbogen**

**HCI-PSAR Project Surveyors  
Bucks County Symposium  
October 2, 2014**